

# The Commoner

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## "The Philistines Be Upon Thee"

The democratic leaders at Washington need to be aroused by some such startling warning as that used to stir Samson to deeds of strength. And surely the Philistines are upon us. The republicans, made hopeful by the victory of 1918 and confident by the elections of last month, are arranging their forces for the battle of 1920. They will have money in abundance, as the Newberry campaign of last fall proves; they will have the press of the north almost unanimously on their side, they will have the mistakes of the administration—many of them unavoidable in so big a war—to furnish a basis for attack and they will have a group of new issues that give opportunity for misrepresentation. The harvest is ripe for the reactionary and the reapers, with sharpened sickles, wait impatiently for the signal to begin.

And the defenders of advance ground taken—the champions of the people's interests and rights, where are they? No candidate has announced his willingness to assume the leadership, and those whose names are discussed have not divulged their views on the issues now dividing the people. What is the matter? Is this the party that triumphed in 1912 and wrote such a glorious chapter of reforms between 1913 and 1917? What has palsied the party's arm and sapped its vigor?

Awake democratic leaders; face the new problems. Apply democratic principles to the questions that have arisen; agree upon a democratic program and call the rank and file of the party to the colors. The time for action is here.

W. J. BRYAN.

### A SECOND "NEW" PARTY

Another new party has flung its banner to the breeze, taking as its name the Liberal party. As government ownership of all monopolies is the principal plank in its platform, it is headed in the right direction; but why not act with the democratic party? For twenty years it has declared and reiterated that a private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable. Nothing can be stronger than that.

### COMPROMISE THE ONLY HOPE

Is ratification to be defeated by a democratic minority? Can the democrats hope to escape responsibility if they prevent a compromise? It is mockery to talk about favoring a League of Nations if we favor only such a league as is satisfactory to a minority of the senate. We can not go before the people on such an issue. The senate is a constitutional body, and the right of a majority to rule applies there as elsewhere. The people can change the senate if they do not approve of its course, but a minority of the senate can not disregard the will of the majority.

W. J. BRYAN.



### DR. GARFIELD'S POSITION

Dr. Garfield is right in opposing the plan adopted in settling the coal strike; no commission should be allowed to make a final decision in the matter so important to the public. It is gambling on the judgment of the man supposed to represent the public, and he may be outvoted if the other two agree upon terms that transfer the burden to the whole public.

### CLOTURE

The joy brought to the country by the invoking of the cloture rule in the senate ought to convince the senate of the wisdom of allowing a MAJORITY to close debate. The present rule requires TWO-THIRDS; it puts the senate in the hands of a minority. That is not democracy; it is a survival of the aristocratic fear of the rule of the people.

With the bullion in a silver dollar worth five cents more than the bullion in a gold dollar the cross of gold does not look so yellow and the crown is not so thorny as it was.

Now, if the senate will reach a compromise on the reservations and enter the League of Nations, and then reject the proposed alliance with France, all its sins will be forgiven.

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## Exaggeration on Both Sides

The breathing spell between the special session and the regular one has given time for calm deliberation, and the senators have doubtless found upon reflection that there has been exaggeration on both sides and that this exaggeration has been the chief cause of disagreement. Take two propositions, for instance; the Republicans have strenuously contended for what is known as the preamble in which it is provided that three of the principal nations must accept the senate reservations before the treaty will become binding. The situation in Europe is such that the reservations would in all probability be accepted, because the United States is necessary to the League, but why insist upon acceptance? Acquiescence in the reservations is much easier for the other nations and just as effective in protecting our rights. If other governments are required to formally accept the reservations adopted they may arouse in other legislative bodies debates similar to that which has delayed ratification by the senate, and any number of counter reservations may be proposed, and if backed by popular sentiment may be adopted, and then we would be called upon to formally accept or reject. Surely, the Republicans who really favor ratification will see that acceptance by acquiescence is the line of least resistance; it would make acceptance of our reservations by other nations certain.

The reservation of Section 10 is the other stumbling block. Its importance has also been magnified. The language of the covenant really left no doubt as to the right of each nation to decide whether it would follow the advice given by the League, and the requirement of an unanimous vote still further protected us, because we can absolutely control the action of our delegates by the law that creates them or by subsequent instructions. But the reservation provided in Article 10 raises no real difficulty. Both sides agree that congress and congress alone can declare war, so that any promise now made that a future congress will declare war is without legal effect. Having admitted that congress cannot be deprived of the war making power by treaty, the Democrats are in no position to go before the country on the proposition that this congress can enter into a MORAL obligation which will VIRTUALLY deny to congress its right to act independently and with the light that it has, when the time for action comes.

If a promise made NOW is morally binding, how can congress refuse to keep the promise without a repudiation of the nation's honor? And how can the promise be binding without robbing congress of a constitutional right?

Eighty-one senators have voted in favor of ratification in some form. It would be a reflection upon their intelligence, their honesty